GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4808
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2007
ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS
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Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a clear cut demarcation of duties for the workers at every level of the Panchayati Raj System;

(b) if so, the details of the duties assigned to them; and

(c) the role and the functions of Panchayati Raj Institutions in the villages?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR)

(a) to (c): Article 243G of the Constitution provides that the legislature of a State may, by law, endow the Panchayats with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self government and such law may contain provisions for devolution of powers and responsibility upon Panchayats at the appropriate level, subject to such conditions as may be specified therein, with respect to-

(i) the preparation of Plans for economic development and social justice;

(ii) the implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them including those in relation to the matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule.

Accordingly, Panchayats can be assigned the responsibilities for any of the functions listed in the 11th Schedule and any other matter devolved by the State Legislature. The role and functions of Panchayati Raj Institutions in each State depends upon the scope of devolution of powers and responsibilities to Panchayats at each level as provided in the State Panchayati Raj Legislations concerned. In order to evolve a national consensus on the transfer of powers to Panchayats in accordance with State Legislation, it was decided at the First Round Table of State Ministers of Panchayati Raj held in Kolkatta in July 2004 that the States must first identify activities related to the functions transferred to Panchayats which could be assigned to each level of the Panchayat. This exercise is termed `Activity Mapping` and is to be guided by the principle of subsidiarity i.e. that any activity which can be undertaken at a lower level must be undertaken at that level alone and at no higher level.

The transfer of functionaries to Panchayati Raj Institutions is required to be patterned on the activities assigned to different levels of Panchayats. At present States have devolved functions and functionaries to Panchayats to different extents in varying degress. Details obtained from States are given in Annexe. It is the constant endeavour of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to persuade the States to complete the exercise of Activity Mapping and make it real by the transfer of finances and functionaries to Panchayats in conformity with the Activity Mapping undertaken.